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9_10_13 Minutes

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes

Tuesday, September 10, 2013 @ 7:00 PM

Approved

The Park and Recreation Commission came to order at 7:00 PM on the first floor of the Arlington Senior Center on Tuesday, September 10, 2013.

Members in attendance included: Leslie Mayer, Shirley Canniff, Don Vitters, Jim Robillard and Jen Rothenberg. Also in attendance was Director of Recreation Joseph Connelly.

There were no members from the public.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Vitters motioned to approve the minutes of July 23, 2013 as amended, seconded by Ms. Rothenberg and approved 5-0.

Mr. Robillard motioned to approve the minutes of August 20, 2013, seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 5-0.

Open Forum – Public Comments

No public comments.

Review of Landscape Architects Proposals – Hibbert Park and North Union Spray Pool

Mr. Connelly received eight proposals from landscape architects. They were distributed to the Commission for review. Mr. Connelly asked the Commission to forward their top four choices to him. Based on the response, Mr. Connelly will have the top four attend the September 24, 2013 meeting.

Mr. Connelly put the projects out to bid together due to the scope of work.

Mr. Connelly will concentrate on North Union Spray Pool and Dan McGrath will be working on Hibbert Park. Mr. Connelly stated that Hibbert is in desperate need of renovation. It is overgrown and neglected.

There was discussion with regard to charging a fee for the spray pool. Ms. Mayer asked why charging a fee is under consideration. Mr. Connelly stated there are some costs to opening and closing the spray pool. Ms. Mayer is not in favor of charging and thinks it is a hard sell because the season is so limited and many municipal spray parks in the area do not charge.

Mr. Connelly feels the park should be fenced in, which is a design consideration that needs to be discussed. Currently, the surface is being used for many different things. Ms. Mayer believes that we should look at how we can use the area year round and should consider whether or not the cost of fencing is necessary.

The Commission will discuss ideas and policy questions with the landscape architects.

Capital Improvement Project Update

Florence Avenue Playground – The playground looks amazing. Some onsite changes to the plan were made, including a curved pathway where the kids enter from school. The area of rubber surface at the zip line entrance and exit were also made uniform. The project is on target for completion October 1, 2013.

The samples for the 3-color rubberized surface will be on site Wednesday for Mr. Connelly and Ms. Canniff to evaluate. Ms.

Canniff commented on how beautiful the structure colors look.

Mr. Connelly and Mr. Saccia, the contractor, both agree that CBA did a great job with the design.

ADA Study – Ms. Mayer and Mr. Connelly met with Ms. Valerie Fletcher, Executive Director of the Institute for Human Centered Design (IHCD). IHCD is a non-profit organization based in Boston committed to “advancing the role of design in expanding opportunity and enhancing experience for people of all ages and abilities through excellence in design”. They have worked with many cities and towns to evaluate buildings, programs and open spaces on their ADA compliance. This meeting was very informative and eye-opening. They talked about not only children’s physical needs in public spaces, but the cognitive and physical needs of all ages. Mr. Robillard stated that getting around in some of the parks can be very difficult and dangerous and would like to be involved in this study.

Mr. Connelly will put together a draft request for proposal. Community involvement will be very important. Mr. Connelly will send the scope of work to the Commission.

Special Requests

There were no special requests.

The Commission did discuss their concern that the Food Awareness Event that was held at Spy Pond Field at the end of August charged an admission fee that was not discussed or approved by them. Mr. Connelly stated that the Friends of Spy Pond Park had agreed to help sponsor the event – though Ms. Mayer noted that this was not reflected on any of the advertising.

Off Leash Dog Review – After getting feedback from A-Dog, Ms. Trainer, an A-Dog member, came up with two signs that had been previously discussed with the Commission. The signs have sets of rules for children. The Commission was looking for something simple with fewer words and more visual, possibly using icons on the yellow background. Signs should be limited to “No running, no climbing, no food, no playing on structures, no waving of objects.” Putting a large sign at the entrances and brief pictures separately throughout the park on the fence was discussed. Mr. Connelly will discuss suggestions with Ms. Trainer.

Mr. Connelly received another email complaint regarding “Joy”, a dog at the Thorndike OLRA. Mr. Connelly replied that he needed information related to the specific behavior in writing to back up these complaints. A sign was put on the bulletin board to contact Mr. Connelly with any rule violations. Ms. Mayer suggested bringing the owner in to discuss the concerns the Commission is hearing about. Ms. Rothenberg suggested the ACO should be involved to take care of these types of issues. The Commission agreed with this approach. Mr. Connelly will talk to the new ACO.

Rink and Recreation Update

Annual Golf Tournament and Town Day Run - The 6th Annual Arlington Recreation Golf Tournament is scheduled for Friday, September 13, 2013. Currently 60 golfers are signed up. The Town Day Run is scheduled for September 21, 2013. Registration is slow. This will pick up next week and on the day of the race.

Rink Capital Requests – In the original MacLaughlin report, Phase 4 of the rink renovations calls for turning the current zamboni room into two locker rooms and moving the zamboni room to a different location. Mr. Connelly is working with the Town Manager to have an engineer verify budget numbers before going to Capital.

Reservoir Survey Review – The survey was sent out via Town Alert. A great response was received on-line with only 6 filled out at the beach. Many suggestions were received and will be reviewed.

Other Business

A 2013 Meeting Schedule was distributed. All meetings will take place at the Arlington Senior Center, since it is difficult to find a larger room in Town that is not in use from Sept.-May.

Mr. Connelly will draft a modification to the gifts policy with regard to live donations and the maintenance of plants/trees.

Mr. Connelly reached out to Juliana Rice, Town Council, with regard to liability for any type of “Art in the Park” program. Ms. Rice had concerns and many questions for the Commission to consider. Insurance and a bond would need to be provided by artists, in addition to a waiver of release. The Commission will discuss options for using the parks to exhibit with Adria Arch at a future meeting.

Ms. Canniff motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 4-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:
Joseph Connelly, Director of Recreation

